593x 578 195

of a few fashionable expressions: vulva matris tuae, comede matrem in clitoride, coi cum matre. The same expressions, mutatis mutandis, are used with reference to a person's father, brother, or sister. The expressions used for "disinterring" are okundola ilongo, isé, nyangó, etc., that is, "exhume your family, father, mother, etc., or bejwó běkě, "your corpses," that is, your deceased parents (this last expression especially excites a strong reaction).

578 593x the effect does not vary greatly. [275] The only difference is in the intensity of rage and of the reactions, which depends on the individual temperaments of the interested parties.

578 593x 627 A Nkundó is greatly outraged by obscenities hurled at him by his wife, especially if she attacks him in public. His reaction is always violent. Usually it comes to blows, a thrashing, and sometimes the knife. But if the husband wants to remain within the limits of the law, he cannot injure or, more especially, kill his wife on his own authority. Before going any further, he must bring his case before the ndonga. His family is invited to the meeting and, if possible, so is the wife's father. The outraged husband presents his case and warns the persons assembled that one day his exasperation will lead him to take up the knife. Having taken his case before qualified persons, the husband can from then on go ahead and avenge himself for the disgraces his wife may inflict on him; it is lawful for him to do so. If the guilty woman starts again, no one can accuse her husband of wronging her, for she herself is at fault and he has warned her in accordance with all the rules of the law.

593x 578 [178] Modern young people do not always follow this procedure. But their revolutionary spirit often brings them reprimands and often gets them into great difficulties. The elders jealously guard their authority, and no one may reproach them for doing so. Therefore in a palaver of this sort, a father will sometimes foresake his son.

602 brings forth reprimands on the part of the husband and his parents which obviously can easily degenerate into quarrels. If the omissions are so frequent and of such a nature that they can no longer be explained as simply forgetting, a whim, or a fit of peevishness, but [299] are taken to indicate spitefulness or vulgarity, the matter is [627] brought before the ndonga (who is often assisted by the family tribunal) or brought before the authority constituted by the woman's kin. If in spite of everything the expected improvement does not take place, the break-up is inevitable.

606 The husband's father and mother extend the same affection to their son's wife as they feel toward him. They consider her their own child, and it is not unusual to find that their love for the wife equals their feeling for their own son. She is only a relative by marriage, but out of affection for her they call her their child. She, for her part, does not use toward them the term bakanga (or bakilɔ́) but [601] out of filial respect calls them "father" and "mother." Exceptions to this practice may be found, however.

606 224 If the father (and those who fall in the same category such as uncles, elder brothers, etc.) kills a large game animal, he is expected to give his son's (or brother's, etc.) wife a piece of meat, whose size depends on the number of daughters-in-law he has and which consists of one or several chops (bokálako) (1) and the piece at

1. Called lieto among the Bolengé and the tribes of the Losanganya.

the nape of the neck (botombyá).

606 835 Illicit relations between the husband's father and his daughter-in-law would be an unheard of crime. The same would be true with respect to any of the "superior" relatives. (2) The laws regulating

[178] [194]

2. Only the Boangi -- like the Elángá of the Losanganya - allow relations between a brother and the wife of his junior; and they are already beginning to find imitators among their neighbors to the southeast, the Injólo.

421 have seen them as money transactions. We have obtruded our point
613 of view and destroyed the whole legal system of the natives. It is through our materialization of those securities that we have lowered the native woman to a plaything of money and a piece of merchandise.

586 As for the two outgrowths of the native system, divorce and polyg-
595 amy, neither is inherent in the legal system as such. They are only abuses which have taken root and which clash with the principles of the native law itself. By its nature, native marriage is also indissoluble, and polygamy has only been able to exist through a popular confusion between paternal and marital law.

4. Legal Power in the Clan

613 In Nkundo society all individuals do not have equal rights or powers,
627 as in the Napoleonic law books, /154/ but the natural rights concerning people are still completely recognized. All value and power comes from God, through the ancestors. Those who are nearest to God are thus the highest in position, his first representatives. There is no question of absolutism or despotism. Just as the blood is divided among all clan members in a descending line, so also are authority and legal power. They are one as a legal entity in relation to the outside world; nevertheless, each member takes part and has a vote in the internal administration of justice, so that, when clan interests are discussed and dealt with, each member may sit in the place accorded to him and take part in decisions. In a legal sense there is, therefore, no question of a separate family council, which would assist the clan leader, but all decisions are made communally.

594 A single exception to this does exist, namely, that which gives the
627 head of the nuclear family legal power over his wife and children, and then only with the acknowledgment and approval of the clan. Differences between autonomous clans are settled by the clans involved, a sort of international court of law where friendly clans may also be brought in as arbiters.

627 Such an arrangement made the court absolutely "paternal." The whole procedure was one of a reconciliatory character, which resorted to coercive measures only when necessary, and did its utmost to save the honor and the welfare of the involved clans, and to compensate for, to restore, and to prevent further offenses.